THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) London Daily Price (LDP) sugar (white) as on 30th June, 1997 (in US dollar F.O.B.) is 327.5 per tonne which is about Rs. 1180 per quintal. After adding the cost involved in freight and domestic transport including loading and unloading, the total cost becomes much higher than the current price of sugar in India. Since 1-4-1997 only 1102 M.T. (upto 31-5-1997) sugar has been imported into the country against an export of 74,000 M.T. (upto 30-6-1997). At the current level of domestic and international prices a substantial import of sugar is not expected.

Decline in sugar production and effect on procurement of levy sale

2053. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sugar production this year (1996-97) has declined as compared to last year;

(b) if so, the reasons for this fall in production to the extent of about three million tonnes;

(c) whether this fall in production will also affect procurement of levy sales;

(d) if so, whether the PDS buffer for sugar would be sufficient; and

(e) whether Government are devising any means to increase the sugar production in the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The sugar production during the current 1996-97 season upto 7th July, 1997 was 127.64 lakh tonnes as against 161.14 lakh tonnes on the corresponding date during the last season, 1995-96. The main reasons for lower production of sugar in the 1996-97 season are as under:—

(i) Marginal decrease in area under sugarcane;

(ii) Significant shortfall in productivity of sugarcane, particularly in Maharashtra;

(iii) Late start of crushing, particularly in UP; and

(iv) Diversion of sugarcane to khandsari and gur manufacture in the early part of the sugar season, particularly in U.P.

(c) and (d) With the carry over stocks of sugar of the previous season and the sugar production expected during the current crushing season, the Government would be able to meet the requirement of levy sugar for Public Distribution System (PDS) for the current season 1996-97.

(e) The Government have announced early crushing incentive @72 per cent freesale sugar as against normal freesale of 60 per cent for the period 01-10-1997 to 15.11.1997 of the ensuing season.

Demand and Supply of Palmolin oil to Gujarat

2054. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the month-wise demand and supply of Palmolin oil supplied to Gujarat during the year 1996-97?

(b) whether the supply has been as per the demand;

(c) if not, the reasons thereof and the time by which full supply will be restored;

(d) whether it is a fact that no allotment of Palmolin oil has been made from April, 1997; and